

# DECORATIVE PLANTS FOR WINTER USE OUTDOORS AND IN THE HOUSE--FINAL AUTUMN GARDEN WORK

**H**OUSE plants are those plants that can be easily grown in dwelling houses. When we realize how little trouble is incurred in growing these home gems it is remarkable to note their comparative scarcity, but when installed they at once become included in the home life.

The chief obstacle to contend with in growing house plants is the dry atmosphere produced by the various heating systems. This, however, can be overcome by standing the pots in a saucer of damp moss, not allowing the moss to become dry.

The lightest part of the sunniest rooms in the house should be used for the majority of plants. There are, however, some plants, such as the rubber plant or palms, which will grow and succeed in poor light.

A common fault is to overpot the plants, thus supplying too much soil, which eventually becomes sour and the plant dies. By using a larger bulk of soil and putting more plants in it the soil can be more easily kept uniformly moist.

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most. It is very important that every receptacle in which a plant is grown should have a hole in the bottom through which the surplus water can drain.

Potting should be done in early spring before new growth commences. Broken pots or stones must be placed at the bottom of the pot for drainage and the soil pressed down firmly until the earth is within about one inch of the rim, thus allowing space for water. With regard

to watering, this can only be learned by experience, more water being required in a hot dry atmosphere than in a damp room, but it must be remembered that whenever watered enough should be given to soak the whole pot, the surplus water running out at the bottom.

House ferns, such as Boston fern and its varieties, should always be kept in a real moist condition. Oftentimes the kitchen offers the advantages for unhealthy plants to overheat in, as there the atmosphere is generally more or less humid, which is ideal. Broad leaved plants should be occasionally sprayed to maintain the lustre of the foliage.

The windows and lighter positions can be made to give the plants a sense of cheerful comfort by using plants with color, such as the screw pine, pandanus vestiti, dracaena in variety, crotons and the interesting Norfolk Island pine, araucaria excelsa, which is a beautiful olive green shade.

The many varieties of the Boston fern, such as scholzei, scholzei, look exceedingly well either in pots or hanging baskets by the window and are easily kept in robust condition.

Table ferns are seen to the best advantage when used with the small palms, such as coccodrilliana and the tiny phoenix phoenix roebeleni, and even kentias in smaller sizes make a good centerpiece for a table.

Flowering plants, such as azaleas, camellias, chrysanthemums, cyclamens, etc., should be introduced when they are about to bloom, as the change of conditions often deters the flowers from opening.

Bulbs such as hyacinths, tulips, narcissus, crocus, etc., should be potted in the autumn and kept covered outside for seven or eight weeks, when they may be brought inside and gradually to the light and warmth, where the flowers last for a good period. By bringing the pots in at different intervals a succession of bloom is afforded.

Placing the plants in the most effective position adds much to the home-like impression of a house. For instance bay trees, either standards or pyramidal, create an imposing appearance when used on the approach to or in a large hall. Trained ivy forms are very effectively used on the lawn.

While speaking of the outside it is well to mention the use of window boxes. There are a great variety of evergreens and boxwood that can be used to stand throughout the winter.

The pretty little Japanese retinospora plumosa sulphurea, when used in combination with English ivy makes up a very attractive window box for outside use. Such plants as dracaena in variety, the screw pine, pandanus and other foliage plants with the variegated periwinkle hanging over the box can be used throughout the summer, and the box can then be refilled for use in the house during winter.

An effective arrangement can be made by the use of tubbed specimen of evergreens such as Juniperus chinensis, retinospora squarrosa, Peabody's arbutus, the globe arbutus or boxwood with large palms in the hall. In this position, where the light is none to good, rubber plants, ficus pandurata and elastic and aspidistra can be used.

ARTHUR J. JENNINGS.

To have the best possible vegetable garden next season cover the beds with manure and turn it under roughly before the ground freezes. Do not break up the soil or rake it over but leave it in rough shape, exposed to the action of the weather. Next spring cover lightly with manure and turn this under breaking up the soil and pulverizing it as finely as possible ready for the seed or plants it is to receive. If the soil is very light and porous do not apply manure now, simply turn the soil over and manure it in the spring and turn it over again.

Do not apply fresh manure where beets, carrots or parsnips are to be planted, as this will cause the roots to become forked; other stimulants may be given while these crops are growing, but the manure should be applied now and omitted when the ground is turned over again in the spring.

Where the soil is heavy or clayey trenching should be the method of breaking it up.

Rhubarb roots for forcing indoors should be lifted out of the ground with a strong fork. Allow them to remain where they are for a few days after they have been lifted to encourage the ripening of the crowns. Later plant them in boxes of soil to be placed in an out-house or under the greenhouse, staging, giving water but excluding light.

As soon as the foliage is off of sea-kale the strongest roots may be taken up, trimmed and packed upright in boxes and left outdoors until wanted for forcing.

If the final earthing up of celery has not been completed give the plants a good watering if they are dry and allow the foliage to dry. Tie the leaves together to keep the earth from getting

into the plants and draw the earth up to the tops of the leaves.

Frames of violets, antirrhinums, etc., should only be closed to exclude wet and frost.

Watch the early potted bulbs, and if any have made a top growth and show a bout an inch of top growth bring them gradually into the light.

Continue planting hyacinth, tulip, daffodils and other bulbs for spring flowering.

Lettuce seed should be planted in frames now for plants to be set out in the spring.

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the joy of living an ever present blessing.

If not practical to take the children to the woods in the right season for this work they can find material in any old garden.

Self-sown annuals and perennials are under the leaves and violets and lilies of the valley and crocus bulbs as well as a multitude of other bulbous plants will readily be found, all ready to spring into growth when the conditions are right, heat, sunlight and moisture, with affection to direct the care, for flowers know and feel and they respond promptly to the heart that calls them.

Linnæus and Humboldt and Darwin and all the lesser lights that lead the way served an apprenticeship in childhood which blessed them and the world for all time.

Seventy-five acres of asters in blossom is sufficient attraction to draw thousands of visitors to see the sight at the Vick seed farms near Rochester, N. Y. Royal white, pink, rose, lavender.

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laid publications of the Department dealing with the situation that has been created by the present interruption of imports.

J. F. Barker, agronomist of the New York agricultural experiment station, is of the opinion that it is undoubtedly true that truck farmers and gardeners will seriously feel the effects of the German potato supply being cut short.

agricultural crops in general, he is of the opinion that the need of commercial potash has been greatly overestimated and that on general farm crops we will be able to get along about as well without potash as with it. Potash, he says, increases the yields on these crops to some extent on almost all soils, but the results of carefully conducted experiments throughout the country up to the present time indicate that potash more often does not pay for itself than it yields a profit. Especially is this true if rational methods are employed for keeping up the supply of organic matter in the soil, the decay of organic matter in the soil being one of the most important factors for making available potash from the normal supplies of that material locked up in the silicate materials.

Joseph G. Lipman, director of the New Jersey agricultural experiment station, says: "The upland soils of the Eastern States respond occasionally to fertilization with potash in the growing of general farm crops. Ordinarily the use of potash for the growing of cereals is not one of great moment where the yields are average and where manure and lime are used more or less regularly."

On the other hand the peat soils, as well as the light, sandy soils, respond readily to applications of fertilizer containing available potash. Sandy and peaty soils will probably show a falling off in crop yields should the potash be left out. This will not occur, however, in the case of sandy and peaty soils which for years have been receiving annual applications of mixed fertilizer containing 8 or 10 per cent. of potash. The heavier soils on which potatoes have been grown for some years and which have been receiving mixed fertilizer containing 10 per cent. of potash would not show a serious falling off for at least one year should potash be omitted.